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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/801,489	03/07/2001	Lianli Ji	055-01	4749

7590

01/13/2003

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EXAMINER

ESTREMSKY, GARY WAYNE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 01/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/801,489

Applicant(s)

Ji

Examiner

Estremsky

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE one MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Nov 7, 2002
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 23-36, 38-53, and 55-78 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claims 23-36, 38-53, and 55-78 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restriction

1. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

Group IIa - the embodiment as best illustrated in Fig's 15-33.

Group IIb - the embodiment best illustrated in Fig's 34-57.

The grouping designations of IIa and IIb are used now since the previous election used the grouping of Group I (embodiment of Fig's 1-14) and Group II, where the embodiment(s) of Group II was elected for examination. Embodiments of Group IIa and IIb are distinct embodiments and prior to examination, claims drawn exclusively to one or the other embodiment should be assumed to be patentably distinct inventions. It is important to note that this is not an indication of allowable subject matter since the new claims have not been examined.

2. Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. All of the pending claims 23-36, 38-53, and 55-78 are subject to the election of species. Currently, no claims appear to be generic. However, Applicant is advised to carefully review all pending claims and provide argument/evidence should Applicant believe any of the pending claims can be properly read upon more than one embodiment of the three groups :

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Group I, Group IIa, Group IIb. Such a claim or claims might be considered generic to those at least two embodiments.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

3. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any

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amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(I).

Remarks

4. While it previously seemed reasonable to examine some claims as one invention, the scopes of invention presented by the new claims places undue burden on the examiner since the scope of claims indicates that the Application contains claims clearly directed to more than one invention since the invention of independent claims 59 and 60 contain structures that are mutually exclusive to the two embodiments indicated above. In retrospect, interpreting claim 41 to be so broad as to include the embodiment of Fig's 15-33 was mistaken and that does not appear to be a generic claim with respect to the embodiment of Fig's 15-33. Applicant's comments are invited.

On a different topic, it is noted that the examiner has possession of the latch models represented in photocopies of photographs already made of record.

Conclusion

5. Submission of any response by facsimile transmission is encouraged. Group 3677's relevant facsimile numbers are :

- 703-872-9326, for formal communications for entry **before Final** action: or
- 703-872-9327, for formal communications for entry **after Final** action.

Recognizing the fact that reducing cycle time in the processing and examination of patent applications will effectively increase a patent's term, it is to your benefit to submit responses by

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facsimile transmission whenever permissible. Such submission will place the response directly within our examining group and will eliminate Post Office processing and delivery time and will bypass the PTO's mail room processing and delivery time. For a complete list of correspondence **not** permitted by facsimile transmission, see MPEP 502.01. In general, most responses and/or amendments not requiring a fee, as well as those requiring a fee but charging such fee to a Deposit Account, can be submitted by facsimile transmission. Responses requiring a fee which applicant is paying by check **should not be** submitted by facsimile transmission separately from the check.

Responses submitted by facsimile transmission should include a Certificate of Transmission (MPEP 512). The following is an example of the format the certification might take:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office (Fax No. (703) ____ - ____) on _____
(Date)

Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate:

(Signature)

If your response is submitted by facsimile transmission, you are hereby reminded that the original should be retained as evidence of authenticity (37 CFR 1.4 and MPEP 502.02). Please do not separately mail the original or another copy unless required by the Patent and Trademark Office. Submission of the original response or a follow-up copy of the response after your response has been transmitted by facsimile will only cause further unnecessary delays in the processing of your application; duplicate responses where fees are charged to a deposit account may result in those fees being charged twice.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gary Estremsky whose telephone number is (703) 308 - 0494. The examiner can normally be reached on M - Th from 730 am to 600 pm.

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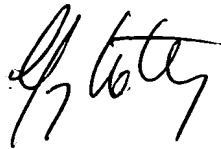
7. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J.J. Swann, can be reached on (703) 306-4115.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.

- Technology Center 3600 Customer Service is available at 703-308-1113.

- General Customer Service numbers are at 800-786-9199 or 703-308-9000.

GWE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GWE' or similar, with a stylized flourish.

January 7, 2003

**GARY ESTREMSKY
PRIMARY EXAMINER**